

Geneteka: Indexed Records Online

Poland “How to” Guide, Beginner Level: Instruction

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GOAL

The guide will teach you how to use the Polish website Geneteka to locate indexed records for your Polish ancestors.

INTRODUCTION

Geneteka is a volunteer-based Polish indexing project. This site includes indexes from many areas of Poland; some areas have considerably more entries than others. They also have indexes for locations in Ukraine, Lithuania, and Belarus.

The project is ongoing, and names are added constantly. If your family does not currently appear, check back periodically. You can see which records are waiting to be indexed and added to Geneteka by accessing [Poczekalnia](#) (translates to the waiting room).

HOW TO

1. Begin by going to this link: geneteka.genealodzy.pl. Click on the American/British flag at the top of the page to see the page in English.
2. You will see a map of Poland showing the current province jurisdictions. To the right of the map there is an alphabetical list of all the Polish provinces, as well as several eastern countries, including Ukraine (Ukraina), Belarus (Białoruś), Lithuania (Litwa), Belarus (Białoruś), and Others (Pozostałe).

Directly to the right of the region name under the heading of **Parishes** you will see a number. This number represents the number of parishes for each province that have been included in the database at the current time.

The number under the heading **Registers** represents the number of registry books that are included. And the following heading of **Entries** are the total amount of indexed entries for the province.

3. You can select your province or state by clicking on the map or under the list of Provinces. This will take you to the index specifically for that jurisdiction. For example, find **Dolnośląskie**, which is the first location on the list or in the lower left corner of the map. You will notice that there are relatively few entries for this area. Click on **Dolnośląskie**.
4. This will take you to a page with several drop-down and search boxes that allow you to

control your search parameters. A description of each is found below:

- **Province:** The province box shows you which province you have selected. To change the province, click on the drop-down arrow and choose a province from the list.
- **Parish:** The parish box lists all parishes within the selected province for which Geneteka has indexed records. Choose a parish by clicking on the drop-down arrow. Your search is limited by the “Parish” you select from the drop-down menu. You can choose one parish at a time to search. Alternatively, you can search for “All – all locations”, meaning births, marriages, and deaths for all indexed locations in the province. Entries sometimes list places as a *miasto* or city. After a town name, you may see the abbreviation USC. This means that the records listed come from the civil registration office (*Urząd Stanu Cywilnego*) rather than church parish records. After the record type is listed a letter in parentheses. These letters indicate the type of record: U for births, M for marriages, and Z for deaths. For example, find the town of Międzybórz. This locality is listed as a *miasto* or a city. USC indicates that the records are civil records, and the abbreviations show that no birth records have been indexed, but indexed marriages and deaths are available between 1875 and 1893. Note: This range represents the extremes in earliest and most recent years indexed. It does not necessarily mean that all years in between have been indexed. To see exactly which years have been indexed, look for the green and white bar that appears below the “Search” box. Green represents available indexes and white shows gaps in record years.
- **Person/Or:** Here you can type in the surname and/or given name of the ancestor you are searching for. In the “Or” box, you can add an additional person (spouse, mother, father, etc.) or surname to search for. For example, entering in the surnames “Adamczyk” and “Kowalczyk” will only return results containing both surnames.
 - Wildcards searches may be used. An asterisk (*) can represent multiple letters in the middle or end of a word. Thus, a search for the surname “Gral” will return all surnames beginning with Gral, including Gral, Gralewski, Gralak, etc.
 - Surname variants are included in the search. For example, a search for “Janowski” will return variants including Janicki, Janczewicz, Janek, Janeczek, Janczak, etc. Feminine endings to the surnames will also be returned, such as Jankowska, Janicka, etc.
- **Range of Years:** Narrow the range of years that search results appear for.
- **Options:** The options section lists other ways that you can adjust your search terms:
 - Choose an **Exact Search** by checking the exact search box. This will only return names you enter in. Polish special characters are the only exception to this. Thus, a search for “Kolaczynska” will include the spelling Kołaczyńska, but will not include the male version, Kołaczynski.
 - The **Relationship Search** feature allows you to return exact results for surnames in the Person and Or box.
 - The **Skip Search in Parents Column** option excludes search for surnames included in the parent columns.
 - **Include Search in Nearby Parishes** allows you to search for results in

nearby parishes (up to a 15 kilometer or 9-mile radius).

- **Search only indexes added in the past** allows you to search new indexes added in the last one to sixty days.
5. After you have entered your search parameters and selected **Search**, search results will appear towards the bottom of the screen. They are categorized by the tabs **Birth**, **Marriage**, and **Death**. Indexes give you information such as the record year, record number, name, relationships, and the parish. There are several icons in the **Remarks** column. Hovering over the **i** will give you more information about the record – in some cases the exact date of the vital event. Hovering over **Z** reveals which archive the record came from while **A** lists the indexer who indexed the record. Finally, clicking on **SKAN** will take you to another website (FamilySearch, Metryki, Szukaj w Archiwach, etc.) where you will be able to find a digital image of the record. Not all records will have all of these options. Some of the original records are not available online and have been indexed directly from records available at the archive or parish.
 6. Indexed records can also be searched from the home page. Return to the main page by clicking the back button of your browser or click on the bar at the top of the page containing the words “geneteka.genealodzy.pl”. Notice the white search field in the upper right corner of the website. Here you can look for specific parish towns. For example, type “Lublin” in the field. Several hyperlinked entries will appear below the search field. Click on the first entry; now you will see a complete alphabetized list of all the indexed names from this entry. You may browse the index, or you may enter in a surname.

Note: It is quite common for the website to revert to the Polish language. When this occurs, click on the American/British flag icon. Be aware that by clicking on it, you may unexpectedly be taken back to the main page.

PRACTICE

Follow the steps below to familiarize yourself with Geneteka.

1. From the main page, click on the province of **Podlaskie**.
2. In the drop-down menu next to **Parish**, select the records for **Drozdowo**. Birth records are available from 1673-1911, marriage from 1708-1911 and death from 1726-1911. Now type in the surname **Kapelewski**. You will see that there are three entries in the **births** tab: Marianna Kapelewska, born in 1893, Józef Kapelewski, born in 1897, and Stefan Kapelewski, born in 1899. (Notice the green and white bar that appears above the Births/Marriages/Deaths tabs. The green parts show which years have been indexed. White represents gap years in the available indexes!) Clicking on the **SKAN** button will take you to copies of the records found on Szukaj w Archiwach.
3. Now, type in the surname of **Gontarski**. The entry for Stanisław Gontarski, in 1894, lists his father's name as Piotr, and his mother's name as Karolina Pogroszewska. Look to the right of the entry; there is a digital scan available of the record.

4. Now, click on the drop-down menu next to **Parish**, and select **all locations**. Type in two surnames: **Gontarski** and **Pogroszewska**. The results show the birth of the son identified above—Stanisław—and the marriage entry for Piotr Gontarski and Karolina Pogroszewska in 1893. Notice under the column **Parish** – it shows that they were married in Drozdowo. Furthermore, it shows that Piotr’s mother’s maiden name was Nasiadek, and that Karolina’s mother’s maiden name was Szuchnicka.
5. Now, do a **marriage** search for the surname combination of **Gontarski** and **Nasiadek**. There are three results, all from the parish of Drozdowo, two in 1893, and one in 1898. It is possible that these three men—Piotr, Stanisław, and Viktor—are brothers. Look to the right of the entry; there are digital scans for all three marriages. Each scan can be viewed to verify if the three grooms are related to each other.

Follow the steps below to practice searching for Wawrzyniec Krawczak who was baptized in the Belsk Duży parish in the province of Mazowieckie province in about 1852.

1. Go to the website: geneteka.genealodzy.pl
2. Look for the records of the city of Belsk Duży, which was in the Mazowieckie province by typing **Belsk Duży** in the search field. You do not need to type the diacritic ż. Click on the entry for the parish of **Belsk Duży, woj. mazowieckie**. You can also click on **Mazowieckie** on the map or list of parishes and then choose the **Belsk Duży** parish from the parish drop-down menu.
3. Indexes to the records for this parish are available for most years from 1782-1913 for births; 1658-1939 for marriages, and death records from 1779-1913. Use the search features to search for **Wawrzyniec Krawczak**. Be sure you have selected the **birth** tab. There is one search result: Wawrzyniec Krawczak, who was born in the year 1852, and recorded in record number 34. The names of his parents were Stanisław Krawczak and Marianna Jandula. Wawrzyniec was born in the village of Stara Wieś. Hovering over the **i** in the Remarks column reveals the exact date was 30 July 1852. Clicking on **SKAN** takes us to a digital image of the record found on the Polish genealogy website Metryki (Wawrzyniec’s record number was 34, so select records 32-29 and look for number 34 on the page). *Remember to look at the bar that appears above the Births/marriages/deaths tabs once you search a particular parish showing the years that have available indexes!

ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this “How to” Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you’ve mastered the Guide! Click [here](#) to try out the Activity.